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# COMFORT:

# A Book for the Cottage.

BY

# JANE BESEMERES

(Janet Byrne),

AUTHOR OF 'UNCLE NED'S STORIES OF THE TROPICS,'
'PICTURE TEACHING,' ETC.

'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.'-Isa. xl. 1.



### London:

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MORRISON AND GIBB, EDINBURGH,
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.



### INTRODUCTORY.

OMFORT—we all need it at some time or other of our lives; most of us need it every day, for in the midst of life's joys there is a daily cross to bear.

God who made us knows what we need, and is as ready to rain down comfort upon our souls as He is to give the kindly dews of heaven that water the earth and refresh it, making it bring forth fruit for the body.

Comfort abounds everywhere; we have only to put forth our hands and take it.

There is the comfort of knowing that our Father, who is perfectly good and just, rules over all, and that all things, if we love Him, will work together for our good.

There is the comfort of prayer in which we may draw near to Him and tell Him all our wants.

The comfort too of the Book which tells of our blessed Lord's life, of His wonderful words and works, of His death, and of His glorious resurrection.

There is the comfort of the Sacraments, pledges and signs as they are of His great love.

There is His own promise to send 'the Comforter' to us, and in due time to come Himself, and take us to the home which He is preparing for us above.

We have His assurance also that He looks down even now with tender sympathy on all our trials and temptations, and is ever ready to help us.

What need we more?

Only to take hold of it all by faith—to believe it, and to live here as His children, trying to do His will in real earnest, and to give up every faculty of our souls and bodies to His service.

If we do this, life will be a pleasure to us, I

had almost said suffering would be a pleasure to us, for His dear sake.

But there must be many a hard fight with self, there must be a very real offering up of ourselves, our souls and bodies, to His service, before we can in any measure begin to feel this.

We are told that He, for the joy set before Him, the joy of redeeming our souls, endured the Cross.

Cannot we, for the joy of pleasing Him who has so loved us, endure to suffer patiently for a little while, with the hope that when we have passed 'the waves of this troublesome world,' we may 'come to the land of everlasting life,' to be with Him for ever and ever?

Some beautiful hymns and verses from Dr. Monsell's 'Parish Musings' are inserted in this little book, by kind permission of Messrs. Rivington. Those marked J. B. are my own.

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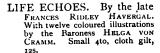
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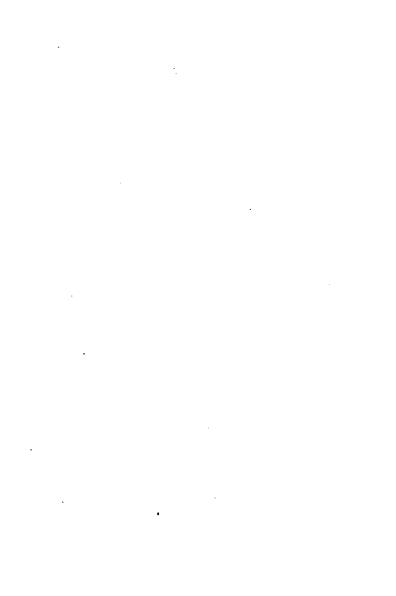
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#### CHAPTER I.

#### THE UNCHANGEABLENESS OF GOD.

'With Him is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.'—Jas. i. 17.

'The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations.'—Ps. xxxiii. 11.

'Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.'—Heb. xiii. 8.



HERE is great comfort in a friend who is, as we say, 'always the

Happy is the person who has such a friend. We all know what it means: a friend who is always friendly, who means what he says, and has always a kind word and pleasant look, not sometimes warm and at other times cold, like the weather. No! what we want is a friend who among all the changes of life is always the same, a friend we

can trust, and go to at any time, and tell our troubles to, and ask help or advice or comfort from, without the least fear of being met by coldness or unkindness. There are some such friends in the world, and we say they are 'always the same.'

But these friends, precious as they are, may die, or they may go a long way off, or it may be quite out of their power to help us when we want help most.

And they are but men like ourselves after all. Though we feel sure of their kindness, and would not doubt them for a moment, it is still possible that some change might come over them. It might be through their fault or through our own fault that some day the friendly face might look coldly upon us, and we might have to say sorrowing, 'What a change has come over that old friend!' Then our comfort is that with God there is no change; that is what this verse of Scripture means, 'With Him is no variableness.'

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to call God 'our Father,' and our Father He will always be, whatever change may come over our other friends. You know how a father loves his children; so God loves us, and so He will always love us: we must trust Him for this. Alas! we are always changing; sometimes so full of happy thoughts, and so bent on pleasing God; then again, so forgetful of Him, so taken up with the daily cares of life, so troubled and anxious about many things.

We forget that God is still our Father. But He does not forget us.

'The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations' (Ps. xxxiii. 11).

This means, the purpose of the Lord is the same for ever; the thoughts of His heart are the same as they were of old. So they will be to the end of the world.

Now what is the *counsel* or the purpose of the Lord?

It is our salvation.

His purpose is to save us from our sins; not only from the punishment of sin, but from sin itself, which is the worst evil that can happen to us.

What are the thoughts of His heart towards us?

They are thoughts of love continually.

Perhaps you do not understand how this can be true when there is so much trouble in the world.

Or perhaps you think that though God loves good people, He does not love you, because you have done so many bad things.

In the next chapter I will try to show you that God loves us all, and that the troubles we meet with in the world are really proofs of His love.

And now I will only remind you that just as Jesus Christ was when He was upon earth, so He is now in heaven. When He was here on earth He did not refuse to help any who came to Him. He came to bless us all. And to the sinner He said, 'Go, and sin no more.'

Now from heaven our Lord Jesus Christ says to each of us the same words, and He says, 'Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out' (John vi. 37).

'Jesus Christ' is 'the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.'

Thou canst not change, my Father,
Thy purposes endure;
Tho' all around be changing
The word of God is sure.

The spring must change to summer,
And summer days are few,
Then comes the fruitful autumn,
And that will leave us too.

But when the wind is keenest, And snow is on the ground; When not a single flower Upon the earth is found;

When work is scarce, and trouble Comes to the cottage home, Thou changest not, my Father, To Thee we still may come.

Thou knowest all our sorrows, Give us our daily bread; And may we by Thy precepts And promises be fed.

May we be warmed in winter, And nourished by Thy care In body and in spirit, For Thou art always there. There, in the glorious heaven, Although we cannot see; Our Comforter, our Father, Thou evermore wilt be.

J. B.

#### PRAYER.

O God, my Father, I am not worthy to be called Thy child, for I have sinned against Thee in thought and word and deed, and that continually.

But Thou hast taught me to call Thee my Father, and hast declared that Thou art always ready to hear the prayers of Thy children who call upon Thee.

Help me to believe with all my heart that Thou lovest me. Help me to trust in Thee among all the changes of life, for Thou art always the same.

Thou art always able and willing to help me, yet how much more ready I have been to go for help and comfort to my friends and neighbours than to Thee, O God. I have too much forgotten Thee; but I pray Thee to forgive

this my sin, O most merciful Father; and grant that all the changes of this world may draw me nearer to Thee who changest not, for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen*.





#### CHAPTER II.

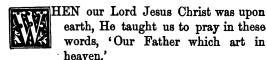
### GOD IS OUR FATHER, AND LOVES US.

'I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

'Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.'—Ps. ciii, 13.

'Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation.'

—2 Cor. i. 3, 4.



And He told us that God, His Father, was our Father too, and loved us perfectly.

And many hundred years before our Lord came upon earth God sent the same message by His prophets.

David said, 'A father of the fatherless is God' (Ps. lxviii. 5).

There is no tender name by which God does not call Himself to show how much He cares for us.

The prophet Isaiah says, 'Thy Maker is thine husband' (Isa. liv. 5).

And again, 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you' (Isa. lxvi. 13).

And again, 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee' (Isa. xlix. 15).

So great is God's love for us!

It is greater than a woman's love for her baby; more tender than a husband's love for his wife; more unchanging and wise than a father's love for his children.

Like a good father, God gives us all the good things we enjoy. He makes His sun to shine upon us, and sends the rain to water the earth that it may bring forth its fruit for us; the corn which is our daily bread, and for which we are taught every day to pray.

God gives us our lives, our health, our homes, our friends and relations, and every good thing we possess.

All our innocent pleasures come from Him; our little children, and whatever else is dear and precious to us.

He made the flowers and fruit trees, the happy singing birds, the pleasant fields, the sweet fresh air, and the beautiful moon and stars that shine on us by night.

God is love—and it is a great happiness to be quite sure that He loves us.

The pains and troubles of life sometimes make people think God does not love them. But you know how much you love your child, yet you are obliged sometimes to give him pain for his own good.

You are obliged to give him bitter medicine when he is ill, though he does not like it, and may think it very hard and unkind of you to give it him. You do not let him stay away from school, though perhaps he asks you to do so, and would like much better to play than to learn lessons.

No; if you are a wise parent, you look forward to the time when he will be grown up, and you think, not of what he likes now, but of what will be best for him in the end.

So, while your child is begging you, perhaps with tears, to keep him at home, you send him

off to school to learn lessons. And children's lessons are often very hard to learn.

Children cannot see the use of learning lessons, but they quite understand the pleasure of play.

So you, my dear friend, cannot yet see the use of the lessons which God is teaching you, though you can thoroughly enjoy all the good things of life, as you call them, and often wish there was nothing else but pleasure in the world.

Now God is teaching you lessons, and very hard lessons they are sometimes.

Just as the child learns lessons day by day at school, so God appoints you lessons, many of which can only be learnt by trouble.

God teaches you patience, humility, faith. He teaches you to depend on Him alone, and to submit your will entirely to His.

It is not easy to say from our hearts, 'Father, not my will, but Thine be done.'

And yet, if we really believe that God is our Father, that He loves us very dearly, and orders all things for our good, we shall submit to Him as readily as our children submit to us when they begin to understand that we only desire their good.

And oh, dear friend, let your troubles, whatever they may be; lead you to God.

'Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace,' said Eliphaz to Job.

As in childhood you trusted your earthly father and mother, and ran to them for help in trouble, so now you must learn to be 'acquainted' with your heavenly Father. You must go to Him in all your troubles, and tell Him everything; you must look to Him for direction as well as comfort, ask Him what you must do, and put yourself in His hands.

In this way you will be 'at peace.'

Such peace is better than happiness; it is 'the peace of God which passeth all understanding;' it is the peace which Jesus Christ left to His disciples when He said, 'Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.'

'The night is dark, my little child, The way you cannot see; Are you not frightened in the dark, So far from home to be?'

- 'My father knows the way,' she said,
  Without a moment's fear;
  'I cannot lose myself, you know,
  While he is with me here.
- 'And holding on to father's hand Is better than to see, For then I secrets tell to him, And he tells things to me.'
- 'But what if father loose your hand, And leave you quite alone? What would you do all in the dark When he was really gone?'
- 'I will not let him go,' she said,
  'The way I cannot miss;
  For fathers never leave a child
  So far from home as this.'

Oh, little one, thy lesson sweet
Within my heart I'll hide.
Darkness is round me, but I'll trust
The Father by my side.

J. B.

#### PRAYER.

O Father of mercies, and God of all comfort, have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer. In sickness and in health, in trouble and in joy, help me always to trust in Thee, and to rest upon Thy word. Thou hast promised to guide Thy children through this troublesome world, and Thou knowest best the way that we should take. Do thou lead me, and hold me up that I may not fall, and bring me, I pray Thee, in safety to Thy heavenly kingdom, for Christ's sake. Amen.





#### CHAPTER III.

# CHRIST IS OUR SAVIOUR, AND SYMPATHIZES WITH US.

'He was their Saviour. In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them, and carried them all the days of old.'—Isa. lxiii. 8, 9.

FFLICTION means trouble, and this verse of Scripture tells us that our Saviour feels for us in all our troubles, that He is ready to save us, that He

loves and pities us.

When we read the history of His life in the Gospels we see how kind and compassionate He was.

'Jesus, who lived above the sky, Came down to be a man and die; And in the Bible we may see How very good He used to be. 'He went shout, He was so kind
'To care poor people who were blind;
And many who were sick and lame,
He pitled them and did the same.'

If you are in the habit of reading your Bible, you have read about a happy little home in Bathany, where Martha and her sister Mary lived with their brother Lagarus.

They all loved desus, and that is why I say it was a happy home.

Now Lakarus was taken ill, and his sisters sout to tell Jesus.

But Josus did not go to them at once, and by the time He arrived Lagarus was dead, and had been in the grave four days.

And when Mary came to meet Jesus, and when 'Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He ground in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto 11m, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.'

Afterwards He went with them to the grave and relead Lamerus from the dead,

You see how very sympathising Jesus was, and how much He felt for the sorrows of the

men and women whom He had come down to earth to wave.

He wept when He saw them unhappy, though He had power to give them relief. And remember that just as He was then, so He is now.

For Jesus is God 'manifest in the flesh,' and God is unchangeable.

- 'Jesus, who suffered here below, Feels sympathy with human wee, And still remembers, in the skies, His tears, His prayers, His agenies.
- 'In every pang that rends the heart
  The Man of Sorrows had a part;
  Touched with the feeling of our grief
  He to the sufferer sends relief.
- 'With boldness, therefore, at the Throne Let us make all our sorrows known, And sak the aid of heavenly power To help us in the evil hour.'

There was once a poor widow who had an only son. She had no other child, and we can fancy how much she loved him, how she would watch for his coming home at night, and how

'He went about, He was so kind To cure poor people who were blind; And many who were sick and lame, He pitied them and did the same.'

If you are in the habit of reading your Bible, you have read about a happy little home in Bethany, where Martha and her sister Mary lived with their brother Lazarus.

They all loved Jesus, and that is why I say it was a happy home.

Now Lazarus was taken ill, and his sisters sent to tell Jesus.

But Jesus did not go to them at once, and by the time He arrived Lazarus was dead, and had been in the grave four days.

And when Mary came to meet Jesus, and when 'Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.'

Afterwards He went with them to the grave and raised Lazarus from the dead.

You see how very sympathizing Jesus was, and how much He felt for the sorrows of the

men and women whom He had come down to earth to save.

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There was once a poor widow who had an only son. She had no other child, and we can fancy how much she loved him, how she would watch for his coming home at night, and how

she looked forward to the evening hour when he would come and rest from his work, and bring cheerfulness to the fireside.

No doubt she thought he would be her one earthly comfort, her support during her life, and a blessing to her in her dying hour. But the young man died.

How his poor mother must have grieved for him! Perhaps she felt it hard in that moment to believe that God really loved her. We are all so much inclined to doubt His love when troubles come; our hearts are weak and faithless.

But the mother followed her dead son to the grave, and, as the funeral passed on, many people walked behind, wishing to show their sympathy. But they could not help her.

At last they saw a crowd of people coming towards them; and in the midst of the crowd was Jesus.

When Jesus saw the poor widowed mother weeping, He had pity on her, and said to her, 'Weep not.'

You can read in the seventh chapter of St. Luke that He raised that young man from the dead.

But what I want you now to think of is the

comfort those words must have given her—'Weep not.'

It was not a rebuke. It was as if a dear friend came to you when you were in trouble and said gently, 'Do not cry,' wiping away your tears.

We all know how comforting it is to have a word of sympathy and kindness when we are unhappy.

How much there is in one little word! We have been worried, perhaps, and anxious and ill, and we thought no one cared.

But after a while some one came to us and said, 'I understand it all. I know how hard it is, for I have felt it myself;' and oh, how much lighter our trouble seemed!

It is very hard to bear things alone. And sometimes we find that our friends and neighbours are too much taken up with their own troubles to think a great deal about ours. They seem to have no time to listen.

We must not think them hard or unkind; perhaps all the while they have some trouble on their own minds which we know nothing of. But let us go to our blessed Saviour in heaven, who is always ready to sympathize with us.

He came down to earth, and was made like us in all things except sin. He bore the same sorrows that we have to bear in our daily life. He was forsaken by His friends. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He led a life of poverty, and He died a cruel, lingering death, that He might feel for us in all our troubles.

And now He says to us from heaven, 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

'I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto Me and rest; Lay down, thou weary one, lay down Thy head upon My breast." I came to Jesus as I was, Weary, and worn, and sad; I found in Him a resting-place, And He has made me glad.'

Dr. Bonar.

'I need Thee, precious Jesus-For I am very poor; A stranger and a pilgrim, I have no earthly store;

i

I need the love of Jesus
To cheer me on my way,
To guide my doubting footsteps,
To be my strength and stay.

'I need Thee, precious Jesus—
I need a friend like Thee,
A friend to soothe and pity,
A friend to care for me:
I need the heart of Jesus
To feel each anxious care,
To tell my every trial,
And all my sorrows share.'
REV. FREDERICK WHITFIELD.

'None was ever left a prey,
None was ever turned away,
Who had given himself to God,
And on Him had cast his load.'
PAUL GERHARDT.

## PRAYER.

O blessed Lord Jesus, Thou didst comfort the poor widow in her grief, and give back to her her only son. Thou didst heal the sick and pity all who were in trouble. Have mercy upon me, I pray Thee, and hear me.

[Here mention your trouble.]

Give me comfort, O Lord, and help me to bear it patiently.

If it be Thy will, I pray Thee to remove this trial from me; but if not, teach me to say, 'Thy will be done.'

Be with me all through my life, and guide me, that I may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that at last I may come to the land of everlasting life, there to live with Thee for ever and ever. Amen.





## CHAPTER IV.

#### THE HOLY GHOST IS OUR COMFORTER.

'If ye love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.'—John xiv. 15-17.



UR Lord spoke these words to His disciples at a time when they were very unhappy. Their hearts were troubled, because they knew that

their Master would soon be taken from them.

Jesus had told them that He must leave them, and then, seeing their distress, He spoke to them very comforting words, and said, 'I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever.'

To abide means to stay.

Jesus must go away, but the Holy Spirit, which He would send into the hearts of His

faithful disciples, would stay with them for ever. He would never leave them unless they forced Him to do so by wilful sin and disobedience.

Observe that Christ says, 'Keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter.'

We must not expect heavenly comfort if we choose to break God's commandments. But if we ask His help and try to love and serve Him with all our hearts, then will the Holy Spirit be with us to teach us and guide us always. This is a blessed promise indeed.

It is the promise of a Friend who can never fail us, who will be like a Light in a dark world, who has all the power and all the will to make us good and happy.

'Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed His tender last farewell, A Guide, a Comforter, bequeathed With us to dwell.

'He came sweet influence to impart,
A gracious willing guest,
While He can find one humble heart
Wherein to rest.

'Spirit of purity and grace,
Our weakness, pitying, see;
O make our hearts Thy dwelling-place,
And worthier Thee.'

You know that when we die we leave anything that is very precious to us to those we most love.

This is to 'bequeath.'

And before Jesus died upon the cross He bequeathed to His disciples (that is, to all who want to learn of Him) the most precious gift of the Holy Spirit.

Just as the rain and the dew from heaven come down and refresh the grass and the flowers of the field, so does the Holy Spirit come down and refresh weary souls.

Our souls are weary sometimes.

Perhaps our friends vex us, or our enemies speak unkindly of us, or we find life hard and difficult.

We toil, perhaps, from morning till night with little profit.

We work hard, and yet can hardly supply our families with bread.

Or perhaps we are blind or deaf, and we long to be able to see and hear like other people. Or we are ill, and have few comforts.

Or we have lost a dear child, or a friend who was dearer than a brother.

All these things make the heart ache, and the spirit grow weary.

But listen to these kind words which were spoken by Christ to us.

'If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?'

And this Spirit, which is promised to us if we only ask for it, is the Spirit of peace, the Comforter.

You might as well expect to see a flower grow up and flourish without a drop of water, as expect any good to grow up in your heart without the Holy Spirit. And you might as well expect to find your way to the other end of the world without any one helping you, as expect to find your way to heaven without the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

'Come, gracious Spirit, heavenly Dove, With light and comfort from above; Be Thou our Guardian, Thou our Guide, O'er every thought and step preside.

- 'The light of truth to us display, And make us know and choose Thy way; Plant holy fear in every heart, That we from Thee may ne'er depart.
- 'Lead us to Christ, the living Way, Nor let us from His precepts stray; Lead us to holiness, the road That we must take to dwell with God.
- 'Lead us to heaven, that we may share Fulness of joy for ever there:

  Lead us to God, our final rest,

  To be with Him for ever blest.' Amen.

I have told you that the Holy Spirit is compared to water. As the rain from heaven causes the flowers and fruit to spring up and grow, so the Holy Spirit makes good thoughts arise in our hearts.

There are two other ways in which the Holy Spirit may be compared to water. As water purifies and cleanses our bodies, so the Spirit cleanses our souls from sin.

And as water satisfies one who is faint or dying with thirst, so the Holy Spirit satisfies the thirsty soul. Perhaps you do not understand how a soul can be thirsty.

I will tell you.

Do you feel quite satisfied with your lot?

Do you want anything that you have not got?

Do you wish to be better than you are? more useful on earth and more prepared for heaven?

All these feelings show that the soul is thirsty.

'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled' (Matt. v. 6).

Nothing can satisfy you but the Holy Spirit of God.

Happy are you indeed if you thirst for that Spirit, not only to comfort you, but also to make you good.

Here are promises for you.

The first is a message sent from God by the prophet Isaiah.

'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price' (Isa. lv. 1). And he goes on to say:

'Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live' (ver. 3), meaning that the word of God spoken by him was like meat and drink to nourish the soul of man.

And when our Saviour was on earth, He said:

'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink' (John vii. 37).

'But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive' (ver. 39).

## PRAYER.

O God, my Father, I earnestly desire to serve Thee.

But I can do nothing of myself that is good. I am weak and sinful. I cannot even think a good thought without Thy help.

O my God, Thou hast promised to give Thy Holy Spirit to those who ask it. Now I come to ask Thee humbly and earnestly for this precious gift. O fulfil Thine own gracious promise, and give me the Holy Spirit that I pray for, to make me good and strong, to comfort me in my troubles, to help me in

temptation, and to enable me to do my duty every day.

Thou knowest, O God, the sin I am most apt to fall into. [Here name it.] Pray give me Thy grace, and hold me back from this and every other sin. Watch over me, O Lord, lest I enter into temptation, and bless and comfort me now and always, I pray Thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.





## CHAPTER V.

CHRIST IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD, AND LEADS US OUT.

Jesus said, 'I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.'—John x. 14.

HAT did Jesus mean?

He meant that He takes care of His people and leads them as a shepherd leads his sheep, and keeps

them safe from the wild beasts. But in England there are no wild beasts, and the sheep are put into a field, or left to wander about on the hills without needing a shepherd to be constantly with them.

In the country where Jesus lived and taught the people it was quite different.

Many wolves are in that country, and the sheep might at any moment be torn by the wolves. Or they might be carried off by robbers, or swept away by some mountain torrent. The shepherd there must be constantly with his sheep, and ready to save them from danger at the risk of his own life.

When David was minding his father's flock (that King David who was a shepherd boy in his youth), he slew a lion and a bear in defence of his sheep.

The Eastern shepherd has great privations to endure for his sheep. In the long summer days he is often parched with thirst under a burning sun; and in the winter he is often drenched to the skin by heavy showers of rain, or almost buried under the driving snow.

You may think how fond the shepherd is of his sheep. He gives each of them a name, and they know his voice, and come to him whenever he calls them.

He knows each separate sheep and lamb by its own name; and his custom is to go before them and guide them where they will find good pasture and streams of clear water.

You know the beautiful Psalm xxiii.: 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I

walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

This Psalm was written by King David, who was himself a shepherd in his youth. While he was tending his sheep and leading them forth, God put into his heart sweet thoughts, and perhaps it was at this time that He inspired this beautiful Psalm.

'The Lord is my Shepherd,' so sang David, and he knew that as he guided his sheep, so his Father in heaven was guiding him. Little did he know what was before him, but he knew that 'goodness and mercy' would 'follow him all the days of his life,' for he trusted in God, and 'His mercy endureth for ever.'

We ought to have the same confidence, and if we put ourselves in the keeping of the 'Good Shepherd' we shall want nothing.

For just as the Eastern shepherds knew

their sheep each one by name, so Jesus knows each one of us.

- 'Was there ever kindest shepherd Half so gentle, half so sweet As the Saviour who would have us Come and gather round His feet?
- 'Pining souls! come nearer Jesus,
  And, oh come, not doubting thus,
  But with faith that trusts more bravely
  His vast tenderness for us.
- 'If our love were but more simple,
  We should take Him at His word;
  And our lives would be all sunshine
  In the sweetness of our Lord.'

FABER.

Jesus is calling to us, though perhaps we do not hear Him, and telling us to follow Him.

Why do we not hear?

Perhaps it is because we are not *listening* for His voice; we have strayed away from Him, and do not want to follow Him.

But how can we hear the voice of Jesus when He is in heaven and we are upon earth?

There are two or three ways which I will tell you.

He speaks to us by His ministers.

Do you go to His House of Prayer and hear sermons?

The minister is the servant of Christ, and he speaks to you in His name.

Be sure you go regularly to God's House, and listen attentively to what you hear, and then, when you come home, think over it all, and try to practise it in your everyday life.

Jesus speaks to you in the Bible. His own words are written down there. Read a few verses of the Bible every day, and try to understand them, or ask some friend to explain them. Above all, ask God, whenever you open the Book, to give you His Holy Spirit to teach you the meaning of what you read.

There is another way in which Christ speaks to you, and that is by the voice of conscience.

There is a voice within you which tells you what is right and what is wrong. When you disobey that voice, you disobey Jesus; and if you are not careful to listen to it, you will wander farther and farther from the Good Shepherd. You are taking your own way, and not His way, and at last you will hardly hear His

voice at all, and will get confused and lose your way.

Alas! that would be sad indeed, for the world is full of evil, and the only way of passing through it safely is to listen always for the voice of Jesus.

The devil, like a roaring lion, goes about, trying to destroy us, and if we wander away from the Good Shepherd, how can we be safe or happy? How can we hope to reach heaven at last, if we will not listen to the voice of our Guide?

But if we try to follow Jesus, happy are we! Whatever troubles may befall us, He will be with us in them all, and at last bring us safely to our happy home in heaven.

We have a home so sweet,
A home beyond the sky;
A home of love where we shall meet
Our dear ones by and by.

A Shepherd kind and true,
Who leads to that bright home,
And, calling gently me and you,
Bids us by name to come.

How dear the Shepherd's voice! How lovingly He calls, And bids us always to rejoice Whatever ill befalls.

For He is by our side
To conquer all our foes;
And Death was slain when Jesus died,
And from the grave arose.

Then to that home so sweet,
That home beyond the sky,
Oh, follow on with willing feet,
And meet Him by and by.
J. B.

'The King of love my Shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never; I nothing lack if I am His, And He is mine for ever.

'Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, But yet in love He sought me, And on His shoulder gently laid, And home, rejoicing, brought me.

- 'In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear Lord, beside me. Thy rod and staff my comfort still, Thy Cross before to guide me.
- 'And so, through all the length of days
  Thy goodness faileth never;
  Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
  Within Thy house for ever.' Amen.

# PRAYER.

Blessed Jesus, the Good Shepherd of the sheep, lead me and guide me, I beseech Thee, in the right way.

Help me to follow Thee, to be meek and lowly in heart, to forgive my enemies, and to bear patiently the troubles of this life.

Teach me to trust in Thee at all times, and do Thou, Lord, help and comfort me. Give me grace to listen to Thy voice, and to do Thy holy will, and bring me, I pray Thee, to Thy heavenly kingdom, to live with Thee for ever and ever. Amen.



# CHAPTER VI.

#### THE HEAVENLY COUNTRY.

'Here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.'—Heb. xiii. 14.

- 'One sweetly solemn thought Comes to me o'er and o'er; I'm nearer home to-day Than ever I've been before.
- 'Nearer my Father's house,
  Where the 'many mansions be;
  Nearer the great white throne,
  Nearer the jasper sea.
- 'Nearer the bound of life,
  Where we lay our burdens down:
  Nearer leaving the cross,
  Nearer wearing the crown.'

E are all travelling towards the end.

Oh, may that end be heaven!

May each day's journey bring us really 'nearer home.'

But before we take the comfort that this thought naturally brings, let us ask ourselves—'Are we really seeking the heavenly country? Have we set out on the journey at all?'

We must remember there is a broad way that leads to destruction, in which many walk, as well as the narrow way that leads to life, of which our Lord warns us, 'Few there be that find it' (Matt. vii. 14).

We must therefore carefully examine ourselves as to whether we are on the right road.

Have we taken Christ as our Saviour and our Guide?

Are we trusting to Him, and Him only, for salvation? And are we trying to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life?

If so, happy are we; and let us take the full comfort of our position as 'fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.'

Let us confess that we are 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth,' and 'desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.'

Now let us read a description of the heavenly country taken from God's own Book:—

'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away' (Rev. xxi. 1-4).

The Apostle John had a vision of heaven, and this is part of the account which he gives of his vision.

What a beautiful description it is!

What a happy place must that be where there is no more pain!

And what a comforting thought it is that God Himself will wipe away all tears from our eyes!

Oh, let us believe it, and think about it, remembering that we are only travellers on a journey, and heaven, our home, is at the end.

Then we shall be able to bear calmly and patiently the troubles of the way.

'I journey on, "not knowing,"
I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God
Than walk alone in the light;
I would rather walk with Him by faith
Than walk alone by sight.

'I know not the way I am going,
But well do I know my Guide;
With a childlike trust I give my hand
To the mighty Friend at my side;
And the only thing I say to Him
As He takes it is, "Hold it fast;
Suffer me not to lose my way,
And lead me home at last."

'As when some helpless wanderer,
Alone in an unknown land,
Tells the guide his destined place of rest,
And leaves all else in his hand.
'Tis home, 'tis home that we wish to reach;
He who guides us may choose the way;
And little we heed what path we take
If nearer home each day.'

BRAINARD.

It was no easy path that our blessed Saviour

trod, and we, whose duty it is to follow in His steps, must not be surprised or disheartened at the difficulties of the way.

If we were in a foreign country, and were coming home after a long absence, we should not much mind the little troubles of the journey. We might have disagreeable companions, and rough wind and weather; but our only thought would be, 'Oh, if we get safely home at last, that will make up for all.' We keep thinking of the *end* of our journey, the loving faces that will brighten up with joy at our arrival, and the rest and comfort of home.

Let us think like this about heaven. Life is a journey, sometimes a very weary one; but if we are walking in the narrow path that leadeth unto life, heaven is at the end.

Oh, let the thought of this soothe and comfort us!

Let us consider what heaven is, and how great its happiness will be.

There is God our Father, who loves us more than the tenderest earthly father ever loved his children.

There is Christ our Saviour who died for us, and the blessed Spirit who sanctifies us.

There are the friends whom we have lost

and who have gone before us to that happy land.

'There for every little cross that we have borne patiently here will our reward be exceeding great. There we shall find all that we wish, all that we are able to desire. There we shall be within reach of all good, without fear of losing it. There our will shall be the same as God's will—we shall want nothing that He withholds from us. There none shall make us afraid, no man shall complain of us, no man shall hinder us, and all things that we have desired will be given us to refresh our souls for ever and ever.'

- 'There grief is turned to pleasure; Such pleasure as below No human voice can utter, No human heart can know.
- 'And now we fight the battle,
  But then shall wear the crown
  Of full and everlasting
  And passionless renown.
  - <sup>1</sup> Altered from Thomas à Kempis.

'O sweet and blessed country,
The home of God's elect!
O sweet and blessed country,
That eager hearts expect!

'There, God our King and Portion,
In fulness of His grace,
We then shall see for ever,
And worship face to face!'

Think what it is to lie down to rest after a hard day's work! Very sweet is that rest, but sweeter far is the rest of heaven.

Think how delightful it is after a long, cold winter to see the trees bud out again, and the flowers spring up, and the sun shine tenderly and warmly on the world. But how much better than this it will be to see the dear faces of those whom we have long lost and buried out of sight! What will it be to have those dear ones restored to us, never to part again!

Think what it is to be well after a long, weary sickness!

But better than health after illness, better than peace after war, better than the light of day after the long, dark night, and better than the beautiful spring-time after a cold winter, will be the happiness of heaven after the trials of our earthly life.

Will you not, then, patiently bear your cross for a little while, cheered by the prospect of that happy land to which Christ, who died on the cross for you, is leading you?

After a dreary time
Of rain, or mist, or storm,
How glad we are when sunshine comes
So bright, and sweet, and warm!
After a long, dark night
Spent wakefully in pain,
How thankfully we greet the light
When the day dawns again!

After the groans of war,

How sweet the hymn of peace!

O for the paradise of joy

Where pain and war shall cease!

After the night comes day,

After the winter, spring,

After the discords of the world,

The anthems angels sing.

J. B.

### PRAYER.

O Lord my heavenly Father, I desire to thank Thee for the hope of heaven. Pray give me grace to bear my cross meekly and to follow Christ, that I may not miss my way thither. Help me to think much of my heavenly home, and very earnestly to prepare for it. Take from me, I beseech Thee, every unholy temper, and pour upon me more and more of Thy blessed Spirit, making me every day more gentle, and pure, and good.

O make me fit for the blessed company of saints and angels; wash me and make me clean. Give me a new heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Help me to bear patiently the trials of this life, and make me very thankful for the hope which Thou hast given me—the hope of rest after weariness, and of great joy when the troubles of life are ended. And bring me and all whom I love to Thy heavenly kingdom, I beseech Thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.



# Texts and Hymns for Particular Occasions.

## IN GREAT POVERTY.

# Jesus said:

- 'Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.'—Luke vi. 20, 21.
- 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.'—Isa. xli. 17.
- 'Ye know the grace (that is, the goodness) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.'—2 Cor. viii. 9.

Jesus Christ gave up the joys of heaven to come down to earth, and became poor, that we, learning of Him, might be rich—rich in faith here, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Children, do not be afraid
In the dark and gloomy night,
Christ is with you—He who made
Sun and moon, will give you light.

Hungry, cold, you lie awake,
Christ was cold and hungry too;
He who fasted for your sake
Looks with pity upon you.

Children, have you toiled all day?
Is your labour all in vain?
Rest awhile, and hear Him say,
'I will turn your loss to gain.'

Have you sad and anxious care
For the morrow? Have you fears?
Let each day its burden bear,
God will wipe away all tears.

See far off a glorious morn,
Peace on earth, and joy in heaven,
Life's to-morrows, one by one,
Take as each in turn is given.

Each in turn will surely bless,
If to Christ you look for aid;
He is with you in distress,
And you need not be afraid.

Strong and mighty is His arm,
Pitiful His love, and true;
He will keep His own from harm,
Trust in Him who cares for you.

J, B.

'Birds have their quiet nest,

Foxes their holes, and man his peaceful bed;

All creatures have their rest,

But Jesus had not where to lay His head.

'The wild deer hath his lair,
The homeward flocks—the shelter of their shed;
All have their rest from care,
But Jesus had not where to lay His head.

'And yet He came to give
The weary and the heavy-laden rest;
To bid the sinner live,
And soothe our griefs to slumber on His breast?'
Monsell.

# IN ANXIETY.

'I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.'—Isa. xlviii. 17.

'The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.'—Ps. xxxvii. 23–25.

'Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'—Matt. vi. 33, 34.

God 'hath said, I will never leave thee, nor

forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.'—Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

- 'Hast thou within a care so deep,
  It chases from thine eyelids sleep?
  To thy Redeemer take that care,
  And change anxiety to prayer.
- 'Hast thou a hope from which thy heart Would feel it almost death to part? Entreat thy God that hope to crown, Or give thee strength to lay it down.
- 'Hast thou a friend whose image dear' May prove an idol worshipped here? Implore the Lord that naught may be A shadow between heaven and thee.
- 'Whate'er the care which breaks thy rest, Whate'er the wish that swells thy breast, Spread before God that wish, that care, And change anxiety to prayer.'

'When I dread some coming ill,
Lord, then bid me think of this,
That my Saviour loves me still,
And that I am surely His.
More of Thy word let me learn,
Till my heart within me burn,
Filled with love, and in Thy light
Learn to know the Lord aright.'
L. E. S. MÜLLER.

- 'A little ship was on the sea,
  It was a pretty sight;
  It sailed along so pleasantly,
  And all was calm and bright.
- 'The sun was sinking in the west,
  The shore was near at hand;
  And those on board with hearts at rest,
  Thought soon to reach the land.
- 'When lo! a storm began to rise,
  The wind blew loud and strong;
  It blew the clouds across the skies,
  It blew the waves along.

- 'Oh! how that little ship was tossed, It filled with water fast; It seemed as though it must be lost, And would go down at last.
- 'And all but One were sore afraid Of sinking in the deep; His head was on a pillow laid, And He was fast asleep.
- "Master, we perish! Master, save!"
  They cried—their Master heard;
  He rose—rebuked the wind and wave,
  And stilled them with a word.
- 'He to the storm says, "Peace, be still!"
  The raging billows cease;
  The mighty winds obey His will,
  And all are hushed to peace.
- 'They greatly wondered!—so may we, And ask as well as they, Who could this glorious Person be, Whom winds and sea obey?

'Oh! well we know it was the Lord,
Jesus, the sinner's Friend;
Whose care of those who trust His word
Will never, never end.'

### IN ILLNESS.

Jesus 'took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.'—Matt. viii. 17.

He was 'a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.'—Isa. liii. 3.

'They brought unto Him all sick people, . . . and He healed them.'—Matt. iv. 24.

He says now to all who love Him, 'Fear not: for I am with thee.'—Isa. xliii. 5.

And in heaven there will be no more sickness.

'The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.'—Isa. xxxiii. 24.

'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.'—Rev. xxi. 4.

God is now looking down lovingly on

all who patiently suffer for Christ's sake.

Jesus said to one whom He loved, 'Come, take up the cross, and follow me.'—Mark x. 21.

And He says the same to you.

- 'Take up thy cross, my soul, nor grieve That such thy lot must be, For He who this command did leave, Said also—"Follow me."
- 'Take up thy cross, nor faithless fear
  Lest it o'erwhelm thee,
  Without its weight thou couldst not hear
  His voice say—"Follow me."
- 'Take up thy cross, he is unwise
  Who would from it be free,
  Without its pain thou wouldst not rise
  When Christ says—"Follow me."
- 'Take up thy cross, and let thy song,
  Whilst thou dost bear it, be,
  Pain cannot grieve, nor suffering wrong
  While Christ says—"Follow me."
  MONSELL.

- 'The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.'—Ps. xli. 3.
  - 'Oh, how soft that bed must be Made in sickness, Lord, by Thee! And that rest, how calm, how sweet, Where Jesus and the sufferer meet!
  - 'It was the good Physician now Soothed my cheek and chafed my brow, Whispering, as He raised my head, "It is I, be not afraid."
  - 'God of glory, God of grace, Hear from heaven Thy dwelling-place! Hear in mercy and forgive, Bid Thy child believe and live!
  - 'Bless me, and I shall be blest, Soothe me, and I shall have rest, Fix my heart, my hopes above, Love me, Lord, for Thou art love!'

Monsell.

### THANKSGIVING IN SICKNESS.

'I will bless the Lord at all times.'—Ps. xxxiv. 1.

Let me praise the great Creator,
Who in mercy makes me ill;
O that I could meekly suffer
In obedience to His will!
Hallelujah!
Praise the Lord who loves me still!

God, the Father, watches o'er me,
Full of pity and of love;
He has sent this pain to make me
Fitter for His home above.

Hallelujah!
Help me now my faith to prove.

Jesus Christ, my Lord and Saviour
Who was crucified for me,
Stands beside my bed, and whispers,
'Bear this cross awhile for me.'
Hallelujah!
Blessed Lord, I rest on Thee.

God, the Holy Ghost, is with me,
Bringing soothing thoughts to mind,
Holy promises of Scripture,
Promises so good and kind.
Hallelujah!
Make me to Thy will resigned.

Help me, Lord, to praise Thee always,
Even in the midst of pain;
If to Thee it draw me nearer,
All my sickness will be gain.
Hallelujah!
Lord, my fainting strength sustain.

J. B.

- 'Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.'—Isa. xlix. 15.
- 'Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.'—
  Ps. cxlvi. 5.
- 'The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by Him; and the Lord shall cover-him all the day long.'—Deut. xxxiii. 12.
  - 'He shall cover thee with His feathers, and

under His wings shalt thou trust.... Thou shalt not be afraid.'—Ps. xci. 4, 5.

### IN THE PROSPECT OF DEATH.

- 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.' Deut. xxxiii. 27.
- 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'—Isa. xli. 10.
- 'He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.'—Isa. xxv. 8.
- 'My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'—Ps. lxxiii. 26.
- 'Into Thine hand I commit my spirit: Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.'—Ps. xxxi. 5.
- 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for

Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.'—Ps. xxiii. 4.

'I have set the Lord always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.'—

Ps. xvi. 8-11.

'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me.' —Jer. xlix. 11.

'Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me,
Bless Thy little lamb to-night,
Through the darkness be Thou near me,
Watch my sleep till morning light.

'All the way Thy hand has led me,
And I thank Thee for Thy care;
Thou hast clothed me, warmed and fed me,
Listen to my evening prayer.

'Let my sins be all forgiven;
Bless the friends I love so well;
Take me, when I die, to heaven,
Happy there with Thee to dwell.' Amen.

'Let me be with Thee where Thou art, My Saviour, my eternal Rest; Then only will this longing heart Be fully and completely blest.

'Let me be with Thee where Thou art,
Where none can die, where none remove,
There neither life nor death can part
Me from Thy presence and Thy love.'
C. ELLIOTT.

'By Thy cross and passion save us:
By the hope those sufferings gave us;
By Thine agony and sweat,
By Thy prayers on Olivet,
By Thy sighs and by Thy tears,
By Thy people's hopes and fears,
By the peace vouchsafed to Thee
When in dark Gethsemane.

'At the last dread parting hour,
In Thy judgment's might and power,
Lord, deliver and defend us,
Let Thy Spirit still attend us;
Be Thine Eye our leading star,
Guiding upward from afar,
Here, the surety Thou art nigh,
There, the blest reality!'

Monsell.

'Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.'—John xi, 25, 26.

'Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on His breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there.'
WATTS.

'Jesus loves me! this I know, For the Bible tells me so; Little ones to Him belong, They are weak, but He is strong.

- 'Jesus loves me! He who died, Heaven's gate to open wide; He will wash away my sin, Let His little child come in.
- 'Jesus loves me! loves me still, Though I'm very weak and ill; From His shining throne on high, Comes to watch me where I lie.
- 'Jesus loves me! He will stay Close beside me all the way; If I love Him, when I die He will take me home on high.'
- 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'—Luke xxiii. 46.

### IN TEMPTATION.

'In that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.'—Heb. ii. 18.

Jesus is here spoken of, who was taken into

the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He suffered, being tempted. Temptation to sin is misery to a righteous soul. If we love God, we must dread and hate sin, because that, and that only, can separate us from God's love.

To 'succour' means 'to help.'

Jesus, having suffered temptation while He was on earth, is ready to help all who are tempted.

Ask Him, therefore, to help you.

He 'was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'—Heb. iv. 15, 16.

Are you weary with fighting against sin?

Does your strength seem to be gone?

Then listen to these words spoken by God

through His prophet Isaiah.

'Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.'—Isa. xl. 28-31.

Here is a promise for you. Only wait on the Lord, do not be discouraged, pray continually to Him, and He will hold you up. He will not let you fall.

'Talk not of weakness; who is strong unless God's arm uphold him, and God's Spirit bless? Dread not the din, the toil, the tug of war, Christ makes His servant, "more than conqueror."'

Monsell.

'Cheer up, my soul, there is a mercy-seat Sprinkled with blood, where Jesus answers prayer;

There humbly cast thyself beneath His feet, For never needy sinner perished there. 'Lord, I am come! Thy promise is my plea,
Without Thy word I durst not venture nigh;
But Thou hast called the burdened soul to
Thee—

A weary burdened soul, O Lord, am I!

- 'Bowed down beneath a heavy load of sin, By Satan's fierce temptations sorely prest, Beset without, and full of fears within, Trembling and faint I come to Thee for rest.
- 'Be Thou my refuge, Lord, my hiding-place: I know no force can tear me from Thy side; Unmoved I then may all accusers face, And answer ev'ry charge with "Jesus died."
  - Yes, Thou didst weep, and bleed, and groan, and die,
  - Well hast Thou known what fierce temptations mean:
  - Such was Thy love; and now, enthroned on high,

The same compassions in Thy bosom reign.'
Newton.

- 'Oh, help us, Lord; each hour of need
  Thy heavenly succour give;
  Help us in thought, and word, and deed,
  Each hour on earth we live.
- 'Oh, help us when our spirits bleed
  With contrite anguish sore;
  And when our hearts are cold and dead,
  Oh, help us, Lord, the more.
- 'Oh, help us through the prayer of faith More firmly to believe; For still the more the servant hath, The more shall he receive.
- 'Oh, help us, Jesus, from on high:
  We know no help but Thee;
  Oh, help us so to live and die
  As Thine in heaven to be.' Amen.
- 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.'—Rom. xvi. 20.
- 'He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels.'—Rev. iii. 5.

### IN LONELINESS.

- 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.'—Isa. xli. 10.
- 'I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.'—2 *Cor.* vi. 17, 18.
- 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.'— Ps. xxvii. 10.
- 'All the disciples forsook Him (Jesus), and fled.'—Matt. xxvi. 56.

Yet foreseeing this, Jesus could say:

'Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.'—

John xvi. 32.

'Oh, let him, whose sorrow No relief can find. Trust in God, and borrow Ease for heart and mind.

'Where the mourner weeping Sheds the secret tear. God His watch is keeping, Though none else is near.

'God will never leave thee, All thy wants He knows, Feels the pains that grieve Thee, Sees thy cares and woes.'

' Friend of the friendless and the lone, Whose love makes all our cares Thine own, Be with us in our hour of fear, And make us feel that Thou art near.'

MONSELL.

'Can a woman's tender care Cease towards the child she bare ? Yes, she may forgetful be, Yet will I remember thee.

'Mine is an unchanging love,
Higher than the heights above!
Deeper than the depths beneath,
Free and faithful, strong as death.'

COWPER.

'Though waves and storms go o'er my head,
Though strength and health and friends be
gone,

Though joys be withered all and dead, Though every comfort be withdrawn; On this my stedfast soul relies— Father! Thy mercy never dies.'

WESLEY.

Let the world despise and leave me,
It has left my Saviour too!
Human hearts and looks deceive me;
Thou art not, like them, untrue:
And while Thou shalt smile upon me,
God of wisdom, love, and might,
Foes may hate, and friends may shun me,
Show Thy face and all is bright!

'Man may trouble and distress me,

'Twill but drive me to Thy breast!

Life with trials hard may press me,

Heaven will bring me sweeter rest!

Oh! 'tis not in grief to harm me,

While Thy love is left to me!

Oh! 'twere not in joy to charm me,

Were that joy unmixed with Thee!'

H. F. LYTE.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Come unto Me, ye weary,
And I will give you rest"—
Oh, blessed voice of Jesus,
Which comes to hearts opprest!

It tells of benediction,
Of pardon, grace, and peace;
Of joy that hath no ending,
Of love which cannot cease.

"Come unto Me, dear children,
And I will give you light"—
Oh, loving voice of Jesus,
Which comes to cheer the night!
Our hearts were filled with sadness,
And we had lost our way,
But morning brings us gladness,
And songs the break of day.

"Come unto Me, ye fainting,
And I will give you life"—
Oh, peaceful voice of Jesus,
Which comes to end our strife!
The foe is stern and eager,
The fight is fierce and long;
But Thou hast made us mighty,
And stronger than the strong.

"And whosoever cometh,
I will not cast him out"—
Oh, patient voice of Jesus,
Which drives away our doubt!

Which calls us, very sinners,
Unworthy though we be
Of love so free and boundless,
To come, dear Lord, to Thee.'
CHATTERTON DIX.

## THE DEATH OF FRIENDS.

'I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.'—1 Thess. iv. 13, 14.

'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.'—John xi. 25, 26.

'I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'—Rev. xiv. 13.

'To die is gain.'—Phil. i. 21.

They are 'present with the Lord.'—2 Cor. v. 8.

'Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.'—1 Cor. xv. 20-22.

The body 'is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.'—1 Cor. xv. 42-44.

'So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'—1 Cor. xv. 54-57.

- 'When our heads are bowed with wee, When our bitter tears o'erflow, When we mourn the lost, the dear, Jesus, Son of David, hear.
- 'Thou our throbbing flesh hast worn; Thou our mortal grief hast borne; Thou hast shed the bitter tear; Jesus, Son of David, hear.
- 'Thou hast bowed the dying head; Thou Thy precious blood hast shed; Thou hast filled a mortal bier; Jesus, Son of David, hear.'

MILMAN.

'Why do we mourn departing friends, Or shake at death's alarms? 'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends To call them to His arms.

- 'Are we not tending upwards too,
  As fast as time can move?
  Nor would we wish the hours more slow,
  To keep us from His love.
- 'Why should we tremble to convey
  Their bodies to the tomb?
  There once the flesh of Jesus lay,
  And left a long perfume.
- 'The graves of all His saints He blest, And softened every bed: Where should the dying members rest, But with their dying Head?
- 'Thence He arose, ascending high, And showed our feet the way; Up to the Lord we too shall fly At the great rising day.'

WATTS.

'Oh for that bright and happy land
Where—far amid the blest—
"The wicked cease from troubling, and
The weary are at rest;"

Where friends are never parted
Once met around Thy throne,
And none are broken-hearted
Since all with Thee are one!
Yet oh, till then watch o'er us keep
While far from Thee away,
And soothe us, Lord, oft as we weep,
And hear us when we pray!'

MONSELL.

### SORROW FOR SIN.

'Wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.'—Ps. li. 2-4.

'Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.'— Ps. li. 9-11.

'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.'—Ps. li. 17.

'Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the souls which I have made.'—Isa. lvii. 15, 16.

'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'—Isa. i. 16-18.

'The Lord will not cast off for ever: but though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.'—Lam. iii. 31-33.

'I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.'—Luke xv. 18, 19.

Read the Parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke xv. 11-32).

'Poor child of sin and woe,

Now listen to thy Father's pleading voice.

No longer need'st thou go

Without a friend to bid thy heart rejoice.

'I know thou canst not rest,
Until thou art from guilt and sorrow free;
Earth cannot make thee blest;
Come, bring thy suffering, bleeding heart to Me.

'Thy life of sin has been
A toilsome path, without one cheering ray;
Now on thy Father lean,
And He will guide thee in a better way.

'Come, leave the desert land,
And all the husks on which thy soul has fed;
And trust the faithful Hand
That offers thee a feast of living Bread.

'Oh, sinner! 'tis the voice
Of One who long has loved and pitied thee!
He would thy heart rejoice,
And set thee from all sin and suffering free.

'Oh, canst thou turn away?

It is thy Father that invites thee near!

Nay, sinner! weep and pray!

And Heaven shall hail the penitential tear.

ELIZA F. MORRIS.

'There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.'—Luke xv. 10.

'Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy Blood was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd'st me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

'Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To Thee, whose Blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

'Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind— Sight, riches, healing of the mind, Yea, all I need in Thee to find, O Lamb of God, I come!

'Just as I am, Thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because Thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come!'
C. Elliott.

'Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out.'—John vi. 37.

- 'Thy mercy-gates are open wide
  To them that mourn their sin;
  Oh, shut them not against me, Lord,
  But let me enter in.
- 'Mercy, O Lord, mercy I ask,
  This is my only prayer;
  For mercy, Lord, is all my suit;
  Oh, in Thy mercy spare!'
- 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'—Luke xviii.
- 'The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.'—2 Sam. xii. 13.



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